

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MANILA NIACT IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: XDGS-2

TAGS: SHUM, RP

SUBJECT:FORTHCOMING MEETING WITH ENRILE TO DISCUSS HUMAN
RIGHTS ISSUES

REF: MANILA 11328

1. THOROUGHLY AGREE WITH YOUR DECISION NOT REPEAT NOT TO
RAISE AQUINO CASE WITH ENRILE JULY 11 IN VIEW FACT HIS
CASE SO HIGHLY POLITICIZED THAT A DEMARCHE FROM US MIGHT
HARM RATHER THAN HELP THE PROSPECTS FOR A FAVORABLE DE-
CISION ON HIS RELEASE.

2. SUGGEST YOU STRESS TO ENRILE THE EXISTENCE OF SUB-
STANTIAL CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC INTEREST IN RECENT
ANNOUNCEMENTS OF AMNESTIES AND RELEASES, THE ACTION OF
THE DEPARTMENT IN CONVEYING THIS INFO TO THOSE MEMBERS
MOST CONCERNED WITH EACH SPECIFIC CASE, AND THE GENERALLY

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POSITIVE REACTIONS GENERATED. ANTICIPATING QUERIES FROM
MEMBERS AND THEIR CONSTITUENTS RE POSSIBLE EFFECT ON
INDIVIDUALS IN WHOM THEY HAD PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED INTER-
EST, THE DEPARTMENT INITIATED CONTACT WITH 15 MEMBERS PRO-
VIDING NEWS OF AMNESTY OR RELEASE, AS APPROPRIATE, IN
CASE(S) IN WHICH MEMBERS HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN. THUS FAR,
THESE TOPICS HAVE INCLUDED THE DROPPING OF CHARGES AGAINST

THE 606 APRIL 9 DEMONSTRATORS, THE TEMPORARY RELEASE OF ANTONIO NEPOMUCENO, THE RELEASE OF NELIA SANCHO, AND THE DROPPING OF CHARGES AGAINST 4 AMERICAN RELIGIOUS FIGURES.

3. YOU MAY WISH TO BRING TO ENRILE'S ATTENTION THE PROBLEM CREATED WHEN CHARGES ARE NOT DROPPED OR A TRIAL TAKES PLACE FOR PERSONS RELEASED FROM DETENTION, LEAVING THEM SUBJECT TO RE-ARREST AT ANY TIME SHOULD CHARGES BE ACTIVATED.

4. YOU MAY ALSO WISH TO BRING TO ENRILE'S ATTENTION THOSE CASES THAT HAVE GENERATED THE GREATEST AMOUNT OF CONGRESSIONAL/PUBLIC/NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION INTEREST, ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION AND, AS APPROPRIATE, SUGGESTING THAT WINDING DOWN OF THESE CASES (WHETHER UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE, SPEEDY RESOLUTION OF TRIAL, OR INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS) WOULD INCREASE POSITIVE REACTION TO RECENT GOP ACTIONS:

(A) TEOTIMO TANTIADO: THE MOST DISTURBING AND MOST PUBLICIZED CASE OF RECENT MONTHS. CHARGES OF TORTURE BY PERSONS IMPLICATED IN EARLIER CASES (I.E., TRINIDAD HERRERA OR FATHER REUTER'S SHOEMAKER CASE) ARE PARTICULARLY DAMAGING, SINCE THIS IMPLIES HIGH-LEVEL CONDONING OF ACTIVITIES RATHER THAN POSSIBILITY OF ISOLATED ABERRATION BY UNSUPERVISED MILITARY PERSONNEL. THE TASK
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FORCE ON DETAINEES' QUOTE SPECIAL REPORT ON RECENT INCREASING INCIDENCE OF TORTURE IN THE GREATER MANILA AREA (APRIL - MAY 1978) UNQUOTE HAS RECEIVED HEAVY PLAY HERE AND TRIGGERED SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNTS OF IRATE MAIL TO CONGRESS AND THE DEPARTMENT. DOES GOP INTEND PLACE RENEWED EMPHASIS UPON COMMENDABLE PAST EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE TORTURE?

(B) ANTONIO TUJAN AND ALGERICO TIZON: MINDEF'S INFO ON THEM HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO INTERESTED PERSONS, BUT DESIRE FOR FURTHER INFO CONTINUES. IS THERE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

(C) DELFIN DELICA: CHARGED WITH REBELLION IN M/V KARAGATAN ARMS SMUGGLING CASE. PRESS REPORTS SAID 93 DEFENDANTS, INCLUDING DELICA, WERE ON TRIAL BEFORE MILITARY COMMISSION NO. 1 EARLIER THIS YEAR. ANY RESULTS?

(D) HERMON LAGMAN: HIS MOTHER CLAIMS HE WAS ARRESTED MAY 11, 1977, AND DISAPPEARED, BUT GOP AUTHORITIES HAVE DENIED ANY ARREST AT THAT TIME OR KNOWLEDGE OF HIS SUBSEQUENT WHEREABOUTS. HAS GOP DEVELOPED ANY INFORMATION?

(E) TRINIDAD HERRERA: CHARGED APRIL 18 WITH SUBVERSION

AND POSSESSION OF SUBVERSIVE DOCUMENTS, REPORTEDLY BASED
ON HER WORK AS PRESIDENT OF ZOTO. APEARS TO BE NOW THE
ONLY LABAN CANDIDATE CHARGED WITH ANTI-GOVERNMENT
ACTIVITY (SINCE CHARGES HAVE BEEN DROPPED AGAINST THE
APRIL 9 DEMONSTRATORS AND CHARITO PLANAS IS IN THE U.S.).
REPORTED TO BE STILL IN HIDING, WHICH HUMAN RIGHTS
ACTIVISTS HERE ATTRIBUTE TO FEAR OF UNJUSTIFIED ARREST
AND POSSIBLE VENGEANCE BY PERSONNEL SHE CLAIMED TORTURED
HER LAST YEAR. WHAT IS HER LEGAL STATUS VIS-A-VIS GOP?

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